
Third Presbyterian Church
Tuesday Bible Study
Sermon on the Mount – Lesson 23
“I’m Not Judging”

Matthew 7:1-6 (NIV)

¹ "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. ³ "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. ⁶ "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

1. What is the difference between judgement and correction?
 - a. How do you help the person you are addressing know the difference?
2. We are told we should not judge others, this word judge actually means to criticize. What are some ways we judge/criticize others?
3. How do you tend to respond when someone calls you on the carpet or corrects you about a sin/action?
 - a. What causes us to become critical, judgmental people?
 - b. How does judging prevent the church from acting as ONE BODY?
4. Jesus is teaching the disciples that they need to be more compassionate toward one another.
 - a. How does being compassionate different from being an enabler?
 - b. How can we become more merciful and nonjudgmental? Be specific
5. **⁶ "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.**
 - a. What sacred or valuable things should we withhold from people who have no concern for God?
6. **1 Corinthians 11:28 (KJV)** ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. Paul speaks to self-examination when it comes to taking communion.
 - a. When we take a self-examination who are we measuring ourselves against as we examine?
 - b. Are we then called to be perfect before we can take communion? If so how, if not why not?

Workshop: Jesus tells us not to judge/criticize. What he is really saying is don't condemn. When then is it appropriate to call someone on their lifestyle as it relates to their commitment to be a Christian? How then are we to do this "call to the carpet" of our spiritual siblings about their lifestyle/actions? (be specific and give plan)

7. After listening to the sermon on Judging, what was your greatest take away and why?

The Warning about Judging and Criticizing Others, 7:1-6

(7:1-6) **Introduction**: Christ pulls no punches with the criticizer.

DEEPER STUDY #1 (7:1-6) Criticism— Sins

1. (7:1) **Judging**: do not judge; do not criticize. The word "judge" (*krinete*^{PWS: 2209}) means to criticize, condemn, judge, censor. It is fault-finding; it is being picky. It is the habit of censorious and carping criticism. It is not the moral judgments that have to be made sometimes; not the specific occasions when value judgments have to be made; not the careful discrimination that is sometimes necessary (Matthew 7:6). Note that the beam in the criticizer's eye is much larger than the speck in the eye of the one being judged

When a person has come short or done wrong and fallen, he is often judged, condemned and censored. However, such judgment misses a critical point.

1. When a person has slipped, it is time for compassion not censoring. It is time for reaching out with one's hand and offering to pull the person to oneself, not to push him farther away. It is time to speak kindly of him, not negatively and destructively (Ephes. 4:30-32).
2. There is never a spirit of criticism in the humble and loving person. There is only a loving compassion for those who have come short (Galatians 6:1-3).

There are several reasons why people tend to judge and criticize.

1. Criticism boosts our own self-image. Pointing out someone else's failure and tearing him down makes us seem a little bit better, at least in our own eyes. It adds to our own pride, ego, and self-image.
2. Criticism is simply enjoyed. There is a tendency in human nature to take pleasure in hearing and sharing bad news and shortcomings.
3. Criticism makes us feel that our own lives (morality and behavior) are better than the person who failed.
4. Criticism helps us justify the decisions we have made and the things we have done throughout our lives. We rationalize our decisions and acts by pointing out the failure of others.
5. Criticism points out to our friends how strong we are. Criticism gives good feelings because our *rigid beliefs* and *strong lives* are proven again. Proven how? By our brother's failure.
6. Criticism is an outlet for hurt and revenge. We feel *he deserves it*. Subconsciously, if not consciously, we think, "He hurt me so he deserves to hurt, too." So we criticize the person who failed.

There are several reasons why no person should ever criticize.

1. All the circumstances and all the facts are never known. What happened and why it happened are just not known. There are always many behind-the-scene facts. Children and parents, wife and husband, employer and employee, friend and friend—things happen when they are alone behind closed doors. And unfortunately there is something seldom remembered: when people emerge from the closed doors and enter the public, the one who does the talking does not always reveal the true facts. The spirit of talk to others is the spirit of self-justification. The spirit of silence is the spirit of caring and compassion. The spirit of silence is always the spirit which desires no hurt for others, at least no more pain than what has to be borne.
2. All people—religious as well as non-religious—come short, fail, and fall. And we all sin often (1 John 1:8, 10). No one is ever exempt from sin. When we criticize and judge, we have a problem: we forget that we are sinners. When we acknowledge our own true condition, we act with care and compassion toward all as they come short. They are failing now; we failed before. Our friend shall fail later. No one is ever exempt

from sin. It is a continual cycle that is the downfall of mankind. The believer must always remember that his righteousness is Jesus Christ, and he is always dependent upon Christ's righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:8-16). He must always be seeking God's forgiveness and forgetting those things that are behind.... (1 John 1:9; Phil. 3:13-14).

Now this does not mean that we have license to sin nor that our sin is excused. We are not to continue in sin, not by criticizing nor by doing any other evil. But we must acknowledge our weakness and remember that the person who really knows God is the person who is ever seeking God. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

3. All there is to know about a person is never known. How then can we criticize? Think about childhood for a moment. Eighteen years is a long time. Day by day moves into a week, and week by week stretches into a month, and month by month lasts and lasts until a year has arrived. And year by year is a long, long time for a child to be molded into an adult. What kind of mother, what kind of father, what kind of friends did the *failing person* have to influence and mold him? What kind of genes and temperament has he inherited and developed: fiery, composed, inferior, strict, strong, lovable, shy? So much goes into influencing a human life that only God can know a person, know him well enough to judge him. Certainly we can never know one another well enough to pass judgment.

4. Judging others usurps God's authority. When a person criticizes another, he is saying that he is worthy and has the right to be *the Judge* over other lives. He is claiming the right to be God, which is ridiculous. Yet most lay claim to the right at one time or another, and some claim the right to exercise a judgmental spirit all the time.

Note what Scripture says, "Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master [God] he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4; cp. James 4:11-12).

2. (7:2) **Criticism— Judging:** the criticizer will be judged. Note three things.

1. The criticizer will be judged for the very same thing he criticizes. Whatever he criticizes, it is that for which he shall be condemned. And how frightening! His condemnation shall be by God Himself, not just by another person. Such a thought should cause us to care and love and to live a life of compassion.

2. The criticizer will be judged by one law only—the law of equal weight. The law can be stated several ways.

⇒ The law of equal judgment.	⇒ The law of equal weight
⇒ The law of equal measure.	⇒ The law of equal proportion
⇒ The law of equal retributions.	⇒ The law of equal retaliation.
⇒ The law of reciprocal action.	⇒ The law of equal sin.

3. Other passages of Scripture say the criticizer will actually receive the greater condemnation.

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:1-2).

a. He shall receive no mercy.

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (James 2:13).

b. He shall be judged.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:2).

c. He shall be condemned.

"My brethren, be not many masters [judges], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1).

d. He shall be unforgiven.

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:36-37).

The believer must make sure his confession is not profession only.

Thought 1. The person who judges and criticizes can *expect* to be judged. He *shall* be.

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Romans 2:1; cp. Romans 2:2-16).

Thought 2. God forgives the humble and repentant sinner, but He shall judge the judgmental and critical person. There is to be no mercy whatsoever for the person who shows no mercy (James 2:13).

Thought 3. There are two strong reasons for being compassionate and not being judgmental and critical.

- 1) "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (James 2:11-12).
- 2) "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold the judge standeth at the door" (James 5:9).

3. (7:3) Criticism— Judging: the criticizer fails to examine himself. He is inconsistent in his judgment. The word "beholdest" has the idea of continuing to look. Too often we continue to look at the failures of others: we continue to gossip, criticize, and revel forever in the bad news.

When we judge and criticize, we reveal a very serious problem: we have a beam in our eye. We are blind to the truth of our own nature. We too fail, and we fail often (see note—Matthew 7:1).

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord" (Lament. 3:40).

"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

4. (7:4) Criticism— Judging: the criticizer is deceived about himself.

1. He speaks unthoughtfully. He has not thought through what he is doing. If he was thinking, he would not criticize or judge. A thinking person knows that he is just as human and sinful as the next person. He has just as many moles in his eye as the next fellow. Therefore, he has no right to criticize.

The person who judges is unthinking and deceived in particular points.

- a. Judging others is overlooking (ignoring, denying) our own sin.
- b. Judging others is one of the greatest sins because it *is judging and criticizing*.
- c. Judging others exalts us as gods. It usurps God's right. It says that we are worthy and have the right to sit upon the *throne* judging a brother (Romans 14:4; James 4:11-12).
- d. Judging others pushes a brother farther down and tears him up. It does not embrace him in compassion nor pull and build him up.
- e. Judging others brings the greater condemnation (James 3:1-2).
- f. Judging itself becomes the beam in our eye when we judge others. There are degrees of sin. There are not small and large sins, but there are degrees of sin. No sin is small when it is committed against so great a

God. All sin is great. But there are beams and specks, splinters and slabs, gnats and camels. Different sins carry different weight in their catastrophic results. Nothing causes any more catastrophic rumblings than judging and criticizing a brother who has failed.

2. The criticizer is not fit to judge.

a. He is as sinful as the next person, yet he is not considering his own sin. He feels free to be critical of those who come short and fail, yet he does not look at himself. He condemns others, yet he justifies himself. Note: God justifies neither the criticizer nor the sinner (2 Cor. 5:10).

b. The criticizer is the weaker of the two. It is the weak who judge and criticize the most. They have a great need to boost self over others in order to feel good about themselves (see note—Matthew 7:1).

c. The criticizer does not examine himself. Self-examination hurts, so few of us do it. Yet God says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6:3).

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26).

Thought 1. Many protect their own consciences when judging and criticizing others. They deceive their consciences through several actions.

- 1) By trying to be sweet and nice, being soft spoken, and using soft words.
- 2) By always giving some commendable strengths as well as passing along the failing.
- 3) By prefacing the criticism with a statement that they wish to make constructive judgment or constructive criticism.

5. (7:5) Criticism—Judging: the criticizer is a hypocrite. Before a person can pass judgment he must extract his own sin first. When we judge and criticize, we are hypocrites.

1. We show ourselves to be full of strife and empty glory. We show that we are not *lowly of mind*, nor do we "esteem others better than ourselves" (Phil. 2:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

2. We show that we fail to consider ourselves and to exhibit the spirit of meekness. We fail to bear a brother's burden.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:1-2).

3. We show that we are polluted with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice. We fail to be tenderhearted and forgiving. We forget that God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephes. 4:31-32).

Many suffer greatly because of the judgment and criticism of others. When a person has done wrong and failed or come short, it is time for compassion not censoring. It is time for reaching out and offering to pull the person up, not to push him down farther. It is time to speak kindly of him, not negatively and destructively. The hypocrite fails to do this.

The only hope for the hypocrite, that is, anyone who judges and criticizes, is the same as for any person who sins. "First cast out the beam out of thine eye" and turn to God (see Deeper Study #1, Repentance—Acts 17:29-30).

"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Isaiah 1:16).

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jeremiah 4:14).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5).

Thought 1. When we judge and criticize, we are hypocritical. We too fail, and fail often, so to judge another person's failure is hypocritical. The point is that we have not only failed, we shall fail again. Thus our task is fourfold.

1) We are to know ourselves. We are as human as the next person and stand in just as much need of God's forgiveness. And we shall need God's forgiveness again and again as much as anyone else. We are all sinners saved by grace.

2) We are not to usurp God's position as judge. He and He alone is God. He alone has the right and ability to judge according to all the facts (James 4:11-12).

3) We are "first to cast the beam out of [our] own eye." We are first to get rid of the sin in our own lives, the critical and judgmental spirit and whatever else is in us. Then we can see clearly to do what we should be doing: helping those who are failing.

4) We are to reach out in compassion and understanding to the person who has failed, not in judgment and criticism.

6. (7:6) Criticism—Judging: the criticizer is undeserving of the gospel. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before the swine" (Matthew 7:6). What Christ was saying is very simply stated: we are not to be foolish and jeopardize ourselves. When we know that a person will not receive us or the instruction of the gospel, we are not to approach them. Very simply, there are some criticizers and scoffing sinners to whom we must not go. They will hurt us and abuse the glorious message of the gospel.

Thought 1. This was strong language used by Christ. He faced reality. There are some unbelievers so wicked and profane that they can be compared to dogs and swine. They are said to be unworthy of the gospel. Who are they?

- ⇒ The notorious sinner.
- ⇒ The scoffers and scornful.
- ⇒ The enraged and revilers.
- ⇒ The openly wicked and profane.
- ⇒ The hardened judges and criticizers.
- ⇒ The haters and despisers.
- ⇒ The persecutors.

Can they be saved? Yes. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Any who turn and call upon the Lord shall be saved. But reality must be faced: there are some who have reached such a high level of evil they are unlikely to turn from their wickedness. They take their words and...

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| • wound | • scorn |
| • scoff | • revile |
| • trample | • rage |
| • rend | • defy |

They take their minds and hands and power and...

- trample • beat
- strike • kill
- tear • torture
- persecute

Not everyone does all of the above sins, but many people are guilty of some of them. They destroy the reputation and work of a person, if not his body. What a tragedy that so many believers are often caught up in the criticism and judgment of others. Believers are too often the very ones guilty of taking their words and hands to damage the reputation and work of others.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:15).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(7:1-6) **Criticism—Sins:** note the awful sins committed by the criticizer. Christ says the criticizer will stand in the day of judgment guilty of them all:

- ⇒ inconsistency, Matthew 7:2
- ⇒ self-righteousness, Matthew 7:3
- ⇒ spiritual blindness or self-deception, Matthew 7:3
- ⇒ uncharitableness or lack of love, Matthew 7:4
- ⇒ hypocrisy, Matthew 7:5
- ⇒ abuse of the gospel, Matthew 7:6

What Christ says is strong, so strong that He uses pictures to paint the truth about criticizers. Matthew 7:6 is especially strong. Christ says three things.

1. Criticizers are unworthy of the gospel and the truth. They are subject to trample the gospel under foot and to turn and tear the messenger into pieces. When a believer criticizes, the very gospel he is supposed to represent is reflected in a distasteful light. In fact, the gospel is denied. The changed life of the believer is not seen. The criticizing brother shows himself to be no different than the world. Thus, he is unworthy of the gospel.
2. The preaching of the cross is foolishness to some. Some people are insensitive and censorious, cynical and prideful. Their minds are shut. They ridicule and despise. They are increasingly antagonistic. Every indication is that they are incapable of receiving the truth. Christ is saying the gospel is not to be shared with these lest they tear the believer to pieces.

3. The believer must follow God's Spirit in recognizing the differences between men. In dealing with men there is something that should always be remembered: we may not be able to talk about Christ with someone, but we can show Christ by our lives.

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Matthew.